

MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH

GUARDIAN AD LITEM (GAL) COORDINATOR I

Nature of Work

This is responsible supervisory and administrative work in coordinating the efforts of a Guardian ad Litem Program.

Work involves developing procedures and guidelines to ensure the responsibilities of the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) program are carried out in accordance with the Minnesota Rules of Practice, and Rules of Guardian Ad Litem Procedure as well as Juvenile Protection Rules, the Minnesota Rules of Court, Statutes and Administrative Orders and Policies; GAL Pre-service Training Manual, district and local program requirements and coordinating and monitoring the work of Guardians ad Litem.

Work involves the direct supervision of a small to moderate number of subordinates. May also supervise volunteer Guardians ad Litem. The majority of job duties involve performing direct supervision and administrative functions for the GAL program. Positions in this class are distinguished from Guardian ad Litem Leadworker because they may be required to meet the statutory definition of a supervisory employee which means that the employee has the authority to undertake a majority of the following supervisory functions in the interests of the employer: hiring, transfer, suspension, promotion, discharge, assignment, reward, or discipline of other employees, direction of the work of other employees, or adjustment of other employees' grievances on behalf of the employer. To be included as a supervisory function which the person has authority to undertake, the exercise of the authority by the person may not be merely routine or clerical in nature but must require the use of independent judgment. An employee, other than an essential employee, who has authority to effectively recommend a supervisory function, is deemed to have authority to undertake the supervisory function. Work may include, or require the ability to perform lower level Guardian ad Litem duties. Work is performed under minimal supervision by an administrator or Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Coordinator II.

Essential Functions (Any one position may not include all of the duties listed, nor do the examples cover all the duties which may be performed.)

- Evaluates the circumstances of each case appointed.
- Services, assigns, processes and monitors progress and results of all on-going cases. Reviews GAL reports to the court. Secures and uses legal services on behalf of a GAL when required.
- Ensures timely written or oral recommendation in the best interest of the child is made to the court, probation/social worker, placement staff, and other providers.
- Recruits, screens, interviews, selects, conducts reference and background checks on and appoints all GAL staff. Conducts prescribed panel review approval of Guardians ad Litem.

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- Develops, arranges and provides training including pre-service, internship/mentorship, local program orientation and continuing education.
- Supervises Guardians ad Litem. Schedules staff. Assigns cases, observes performance, and reviews case file, work and reports. Provides case consultation and conducts regular meetings with the Guardians ad Litem. Provides coaching, assistance and resources. Receives, screens, investigates, documents and resolves complaints. Conducts staff meetings. Conducts annual performance reviews. Initiates corrective action. Maintains personnel files.
- Responds to inquiries about the GAL program, roles and responsibilities.
- Interprets rules. Develops program forms and procedures. Recommends program policies and standards. Monitors and reviews program activities. Prepares and maintains statistical and other program information. Prepares program trend information. Updates and accesses state-wide GAL data base. Generates reports.
- Develops and administers program budget. Prepares budget projections. Reviews and approves GAL expense reimbursement requests and other program expenditures.
- Participates in state, district and local committees and task forces to promote and coordinate the GAL program.
- May participate in decision-making meetings affecting the child, including administrative reviews, school staffing, placement staffing, and pre-placement. May prepare for and attend court proceedings. May testify and advocate for client, and prepare and educate individual before appearance in court.

Knowledge, Abilities, and Skills

Considerable knowledge of juvenile and family judicial process, rules and law.

Knowledge of the objectives, philosophy, policies and procedures of a GAL program.

Knowledge of the issues and dynamics that surround juvenile and family cases in which a GAL should be appointed.

Knowledge of modern management and supervisory procedures and techniques.

Knowledge of the basic principles of adult education and curriculum development.

Ability to develop, organize, and manage a GAL program and related projects.

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Ability to plan, assign, direct, and evaluate the work of Guardians ad Litem.

Ability to communicate at all levels both orally and in writing.

Ability to relate professionally with judges, court administrators, staff, representatives of other agencies, attorneys, children and the public.

Ability to negotiate.

Ability to evaluate and write clear, concise reports.

Ability to become proficient using related computerized software programs and a keyboard.

Working Conditions

Work is performed primarily in an office setting. Work involves contact with persons who may be angry, abusive or threatening.

Physical Demands

Work is mostly sedentary with occasional walking, standing, bending and lifting of items weighing less than 25 pounds such as papers and files. Frequent extended periods of sitting and occasional travel and lifting of items up to 50 pounds may be necessary.

Qualifications (Any combination of training and work experience which indicates possession of the knowledge, abilities and skills listed above. An example of an acceptable qualification for this position is:)

Possession of an Associates Degree in sociology, psychology, counseling or a related field and experience in working with families and juveniles in a Guardian ad Litem program or similar counseling setting. Some program budgeting experience is desired.

Licensure and Certification Requirements

40 hours of Pre-Service Guardian Ad Litem training.

8 hours of continuing education annually.

Certification as a GAL Coordinator.

Certification as a GAL Trainer.

Possession of valid Minnesota driver's license, if applicable.

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